

Mr. Watkins. Mr. Watkins is Chief Executive Officer of Nebraska Public Power. I've got more hours flying helicopters than Mr. Watkins has been in the State of Nebraska. Mr. Watkins made this dumb statement about it not having any impact upon the cost and I told Watkins, I don't give a damn if you pay the environmentalists \$40 million if they use it to provide habitat. I don't want you to pay them \$40 to hire lawyers to aggravate the irrigators of this state. The reason we spent \$14 million on the FERC thing is because we were dumb enough to give the whooping cranes, 140 whooping cranes, \$7 million a few years ago and Johnny Cavanaugh and his crew have spent that \$7 million, along with a lot interest, to aggravate and irritate an agitate the whole darned system up and down the Platte. It ought to be a disgrace. We ought to be ashamed, we've got a \$13 million fund for whooping cranes and you can't get \$100,000 in the Crime Victims Reparations Fund. I respect every one of you for the position you hold. I respect the experience you bring to this body and the point of view but, ladies and gentlemen, let me tell you something. I voted twice in the last few days to bring to this floor bills which I probably won't support or may not support, bills which I adamantly opposed at one time, the death penalty, but I voted to bring it to the floor because the bill and the issue deserves to be debated on this floor, not hidden and locked in the committee where four people can lock it up. I voted to let the people of Boyd County vote on whether or not we should have a low-level waste plant up there because I was accused of blocking the vote in the committee for many years. Now we put the bill on the floor and we don't know what is going to happen, but it is going to be debated on this floor and 49 people are going to have a chance to talk about it rather than four or five. You heard the testimony in committee. Most of the testimony I could have repeated from both sides after more than 25 years of listening to it. Ladies and gentlemen, I heard someone say this afternoon, agriculture is important to Nebraska. The facts are, most of you don't believe it. You belly up to the food counter and you pay less than 20 percent of your income for food because the American farmer and the Nebraska farmer works for less than the minimum wage. I'm the only liberal farmer on this floor. I have supported every single position for people on this floor, minimum wage, workmen's comp, all of them I have supported because I recognize the right of people. But what my good friend Hartnett and Horga and Beutler and the rest of them want to do is say, the hell with the irrigators in the State of Nebraska. We're going to have water in the river and we're going to have water for